

**Remarks for Lt. Governor Cooney**  
**2017 Historic Preservation Awards**  
*Friday, January 20, 2017 / 2:30pm*

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to join you for the 2017 Historic Preservation Awards. We are here today to recognize those who preserve our history: a history that embodies the story of our great state of Montana.

Our history is seen in many different forms across the state, from ranger stations in our national forests, to a 90-year old carvel planked cedar on oak frame boat in Glacier National Park, to bridges that cross our waterways, to our historic neighborhoods, and lastly, to our own Montana State Capitol campus.

The history and the architecture found across our state tells the story of Montana and all of its inhabitants. All provide a glimpse of what once was—stories hidden behind the different appearances of the buildings, structures and sites located across our state. Amazingly, most of these places are accessible to the public.

Some places require little imagination to understand their significance. The Montana State Capitol Campus Historic District, listed last year on the National Register, serves as a primer in architectural styles.

In addition to the Neoclassical Revival Capitol building, the Historic District contains exceptional examples of Italian Renaissance Revival, Stripped Classical, Midcentury Modern, and Late Modern architecture such as Brutalism, New Formalism and Postmodernism.

With other places, the significance lies below what is readily visible. Places such as the Gardiner Jail and Convict Grade in Park County may appear on the surface to many as merely an old building and an old gravel road.

However, once the layers are peeled back, their history recounts their importance to the communities that depended on them. Until you understand the history, it is impossible to truly appreciate the importance of a property.

Cultural resources represent different things to different people. To some, historic buildings provide a sense of place. To others, the same building can represent a foundation for heritage tourism.

The process of appreciating historic resources and history in general, is learned. “New”, does not always equate to better.

Whether represented by architecture or archaeology, cultural resources tell the story of where we've been, and with effort and good will, where we can go. Saving history tells much about who we are as people.

In reviewing our list of award recipients and their accomplishments, we are reminded of what preservation is. It is hard work – sometimes a lifetime of work. It is activism. It is revisiting the past. It is changing minds and winning hearts. It is understanding that once a resource is gone, it isn't coming back.

Often times, successful preservation relies on creativity, patience, and an understanding that the past still remains with us today.

Today, we gather to honor your commitment to preserve our history and tell the story of our collective past. Thank you for the important work you do each and every day to preserve our history and the story of the great state we call home, Montana.